

HONG KONG S DOVE FARMER

**THE BIG DINNER WITH WHICH HE
RETIRES FROM OFFICE.**

From the Chicago Times-Herald.
In the colony of Hong Kong there is a Chinese

of by the quarter of a million of his fellow countrymen on the island with bated breath. To these Celestials, subjects of Queen Victoria, the Chinese Government is not a far-away great nation, but a neighborly power, and the Queen herself, as the "opium farmer" and the Queen of Shea, compared with "his mightiness of the *shah*," is in their eyes only a far-away sovereign, not half so imposing.

It is to regulate to some extent the importation of opium into Hong Kong and to simplify the collection of duties the British Government several years ago decided to place the whole business in the hands of one man. Realizing that the power would be wielded by a single individual, the Government decided to provide that the office should only be held one year and that no person should be allowed to keep

Since that time the selection of an "optimal" tariff has been a regular and important annual event. The highest bid generally ranges from 100,000 to 300,000 taels, according to the size of the market and the demand, and the condition of the market. The successful applicant is duly awarded in his position, and the government has no further say in the matter. He is customarily employed several swift Government customs vessels to protect his trade. He himself employs several swifts to guard his business interests, but he must only use these boats for the purpose of self-defense. He must also secure knowledge of smuggling routes, and report them over to the authorities, who run the market. He is not permitted to smuggle himself. There is a smart skirmish between the heads of the smugglers from the mainland of China and those from the islands, but the latter are some of them are, too, and very useful in giving

their first taste of such fighting. The sole control of every point of the drug brought into Hong Kong, and to generally makes from \$250,000 to \$300,000 a year, is in the hands of the Government. The Government gets much more from him than it gives him, and, moreover, it is permitted to collect the sum without the enormous amount of trouble and expense which would be necessary to keep the group in the open. The opium farmer's salaries are paid him in advance, and as it is a case of cheating against a farmer, the loss of the raw material goes past him. Once he gives a great dinner to Government officials, news of the colony. This dinner of Chinese merchants is one of the great events of the Hong Kong year. The Government has a large force of troops, and the sham battle between the troops in the parade grounds is a fact, though the natural pride keeps them from open fighting.

When a Chinese man is up his mind to do a thing handsomely he generally goes to the dinner table. This plain farmer always makes his point of honor. He has a large number of friends, some of them of the opium smokers, something like the "Big Game" players. He has a few friends, indeed, he has aside a large sum of money, about \$20,000 to \$25,000, for the harpnet, and always ready to spend it. He has a large expense when he figures up his bid to the Governor at the beginning of the year.

When he is close of his term of office the farmer sends out his invitations. These are always verbal, delivered to the lucky recipient by a messenger. He is invited to sit down at your door with a smile and a bow, and in a long time reaching to his heels, and tells you that his man has been to the restaurant to moderate the Wong Tai Lo Restaurant "to moderate the

The Wong Tai Lo Restaurant, where all these affairs are given, is the Chinese Daimonic of Hong Kong. It stands in the heart of the city, a five-story frame building, elaborately carved, with broad balconies with flowering plants and creepers and the usual huge feast lanterns swaying in the wind. The restaurant is owned by a farmer's representative clad in gorgeous silks, who gives us the usual Chinese directions about the time for their return to the upstairs to the great dining room on the third floor.

down the length of the apartment, are bare of everything except the usual silverware, which is laid out on a table at the big expanse of white cloth has a peculiarly official and restaurant-like appearance, which, however, does not last very long.

The Chinese and Chinese-Chinese faces and Union Jacks twined together, and hanging by the hundred from the ceiling are gay lanterns of all designs and colors enclosing the faces of the gods, and the guests find seats at places where their names are written on pieces of pasteboard. Round the head of the centre table are the ebony chairs of the chief guests, and the Chinese Chief Justice, and sometimes the senior JAVES.

The other diners are wealthy Chinese merchants, whose costumes in startling contrast to the shabby, worn, blue cotton mess jackets of the rest of the company.

When all are seated the opium farmer enters. He comes in through an alcove door, in a rather dignified manner, and smiles at the applause that greets his entrance. In a minute later he rises to thank his white friends for their presence at his lowly board and apologizes for the lack of a more formal dinner. Then he is about to set before them. Everybody knows what that means. Then he turns to the cook and says in a strident, agonizing voice: "Dozens of swift-fowl, waterfowl, ducks, geese, and—"

With silver ice buckets filled with champagne,

Immediately the affair develops into a feast more magnificent than any I have ever seen. The women, imported from northern China, are dressed in the most elaborate and brilliant of costumes. They are seated behind the chairs of the guests and play on themselves hand instruments, singing an almost continuous accompaniment to the feast. The tables are laden with blossoms of the lichee enter and twine garlands of the same fruit. The women are dressed about the face and in the long lines of lantern, a strange mixture of Oriental with food and dishes it is. In addition to roast beef, ham, lamb, and mutton, there are many of the Chinese delicacies, birds of every kind, sharks, fish, and shellfish, ducks, geese, and a pig's head, spitted ripe, curried, baked, fried, and served in many different ways. There are preserves of all sorts, mangoes, mangoes, pineapples, and other fruits, and a variety of puddings.

There is no menu card and no sequence of courses. You just pick out what you like and tuck in it, irrespective of what your neighbor is eating. There is no limit to the quantity of food with dessert or end with soup. The dishes are served in the most magnificent and costly samples of Chinese ware and are intended as gifts for the guests. When you finish a dish, you are expected to give pleasure from among them. If you go away without a gift, you are considered a miser.

IN A HORSESHOEING PARLOR. ¶
A Modern Sort of Blacksmith's Shop in Which
No Forge Is Used.
A blacksmith's shop without a forge seems a novelty, indeed, but there are two at least in New York. In those shops there is applied a patent process which enables steel shod with soft enough to permit of its being

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The walls are covered with Chinese flags and Union Jacks twined together, and hanging by the hundred from the ceiling are gay

electric lights. About three hundred guests find seats at places where their names are written on pieces of pasteboard. Round the head of the centre table are the ebony chairs of the host, the Governor of the colony, the Chief Justice, and sometimes the senior naval

the other diners are wealthy Chinese, some wearing their costumes in startling contrast to the colorful, patterned jackets of the rest of the company.

When all has been ordered, the urban farmer enters in a rather staid manner, and smiles at the applause that greets him as he takes his place at the head of the table. He bows to the guests for their presence at his lowly board and apologizes for "the humble character of the fare."

He then tells the guests that he has just learned that the word "luck" means "to know what that means. Then he turns to the host and says, "I have just struck a Kong!" Dozens of swift-footed waiters appear with trays laden with silver ice buckets filled with champagne, raised glasses and glasses of wine of native wine. A hundred young women pour the wine. A hundred young women pour the wine. A hundred young women pour the wine.

Immediately the affair develops into a feast magnificent enough for an old Roman banquet. The host, who has been invited to the feast in China for the occasion, station themselves behind the chairs of the guests and play stringed instruments and sing songs to the accompaniment of flower girls bearing sweet blossoms of the lilies, orchid and twine gardenias. The guests are seated at long tables about the flags and in the long lines of lanterns, and the waiters are dressed in white uniforms, a strange mixture of Oriental with food and dishes it is. In addition to roast beef, ham, boiled turkeys and other meats, dozens of Chinese delicacies, curries of every kind, soups, stews, jellied eggs, pickled fish, baked hedgehog, and a variety of other dishes, including preserves of all sorts, mungbean, melon meat, paradise fruit and dozens of wonderful Chinese dishes.

There is no menu card and no sequence of courses. You just pick out what you like and eat it. The host and hostess are seated at the head of the table and the guests are seated around them. The host is eating and regardless of whether you begin with dessert or end with soup. The dishes are served in a variety of ways. The host is eating and regardless of whether you begin with dessert or end with soup. The dishes are served in a variety of ways.

magnificent and costly samples of Chinese ware and are intended as gifts for the guests. When the dinner is over you can select what you please from among them. If you go away early enough you are generally wise enough

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